

Application No. 10/671,941
Amendment dated December 27, 2005
After Final Office Action of September 27, 2005

Docket No.: 0698-0162P

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are now present in this application.

Claim 1 has been amended, and claims 14-17 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4-10 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Montoya et al., U.S. Patent 6,421,236. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Montoya et al. in view of Tanzer et al., U.S. Patent 6,661,651. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 11-14 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Montoya et al. in view of Gamble et al., U.S. Patent 6,249,432. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that the Examiner considers claims 15 and 17 to contain allowable subject matter. Without conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, but simply to expedite prosecution, it is noted that the limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 17 and intervening claim 16 have been incorporated into independent claim 1. Also, to avoid non-limiting claims, claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, independent claim 1, and its dependent claims, should automatically be in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

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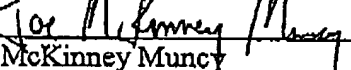
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In the event the Examiner does not consider this application to be in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purposes of Appeal. This Amendment should overcome the current grounds of rejection and therefore simplify the issues for Appeal. Nonetheless, it should be unnecessary to proceed to Appeal because the instant application should now be in condition for allowance.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: December 27, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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